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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Your meeting with the Secretary of State at 6 o'clock

You have the Secretary of State at 6 o'clock. Many interesting problems may come up: the situation at the UN -- your speech -- the Congo -- trouble at NATO. But the main business should be the Rusk-Gromyko talk. The first serious meeting is at lunch tomorrow. The Secretary will undoubtedly indicate his own sense of the scenario, but the following check list is an effort to summarize what you have spoken of in recent days as your own sense of the agenda.

A. Basic principles underlying the discussion

1. Serious negotiation is difficult, if not impossible, while the air is full of threats. On the other hand, if the atmosphere can be improved, we are quite ready for businesslike and constructive discussion.

2. Our basic objection is to the Soviet threat to end our rights in West Berlin. The Secretary plans to spell out the three fundamental rights and their detailed meaning. He plans to make it clear that we will surely fight for these rights. This he will state as a fact, not as a threat.

3. The proposal for Soviet troops in West Berlin is flatly not negotiable.

4.

5. Our presence in West Berlin rests fundamentally not only on occupation rights but on the will of the people of that city. We are for what they are for. West Berlin and its people are not a part of the GDR but a part of our fundamental international commitments.

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